

## Senate Bill 206

By: Senators Thomas of the 2nd, Butler of the 55th, Tate of the 38th, Seay of the 34th,  
Brown of the 26th and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 3 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia  
2 Annotated, relating to educational programs under the "Quality Basic Education Act," so as  
3 to provide that American Sign Language may be accepted for elective credit or foreign  
4 language credit for any student; to amend Chapter 1 of Title 30 of the Official Code of  
5 Georgia Annotated, relating to general provisions relative to handicapped persons, so as to  
6 recognize American Sign Language as the official state language of the deaf community in  
7 Georgia; to provide for legislative findings; to provide for related matters; to repeal  
8 conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

10 **SECTION 1.**

11 Part 3 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
12 relating to educational programs under the "Quality Basic Education Act," is amended by  
13 revising Code Section 20-2-151.1, relating to American Sign Language as a foreign language  
14 for college preparatory curriculum and for Carnegie unit elective credits, as follows:

15 "20-2-151.1.

16 (a) For the purpose of fulfilling the foreign language requirements for a college  
17 preparatory curriculum seal of endorsement on a high school diploma, a demonstrated  
18 proficiency in American Sign Language shall be accepted as a foreign language if it is  
19 determined that a deaf student has a hearing loss which significantly impacts upon the  
20 student's ability to learn a foreign language. The Individualized Education Plan Committee  
21 may then determine that American Sign Language can substitute for the foreign language  
22 requirements for the college preparatory seal of endorsement for a high school diploma,  
23 and it shall be so accepted by all local boards of education and the State Board of  
24 Education. A demonstrated proficiency in American Sign Language shall be accepted as  
25 the equivalent of the required two units of a foreign language.

(b) For the purpose of earning Carnegie unit curriculum credits at the high school level, American Sign Language may be accepted by the State Board of Education or by a local board of education for one unit of elective credit or for ~~the third~~ one unit of foreign language credit or, for a demonstrated proficiency in American Sign Language, for the equivalent of the required two units of a foreign language for any student who is not covered by the provisions of subsection (a) of this Code section."

## SECTION 2.

Chapter 1 of Title 30 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to general provisions relative to handicapped persons, is amended by revising Code Section 30-1-6, which is reserved, to read as follows:

"30-1-6.

(a) The General Assembly finds that:

(1) American Sign Language is a fully developed, autonomous, natural language with distinct grammar, syntax, and symbols, and is one of hundreds of signed languages of the world; and

(2) American Sign Language is the fourth most commonly used language in the United States and Canada.

(b) American Sign Language is recognized as the official state language of the deaf community in Georgia."

## SECTION 3.

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.